

Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs  
Employee Handbook



## **Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs**

1501 West Maryland Ave.  
North Little Rock, AR 72120  
(501) 992-0190 or fax (501) 992-0162

### **Welcome from the Director**

I want to be the first to welcome you to the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA).

As an employee of this agency, you are a part of a team accepting the tremendous challenge to assist in the development, enhancement and operation of innovative, cost-effective veteran's programs in Arkansas. This is an opportunity to play a key role in advancing our efforts to provide our veterans with excellent service and representation.

This handbook is provided to help you better understand the agency, how we operate and the expectations of employees. Combined with the employee orientation program, it should answer most of the questions you may have about ADVA, your role, and how ADVA contributes to the veteran's of the state of Arkansas. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with our website at [www.veterans.arkansas.gov](http://www.veterans.arkansas.gov). It will show you who we are, what we do, and it includes the many connections for our Arkansas Veterans to locate assistance and services. There is especially a connection for employees.

Please read this orientation booklet thoroughly. It will be used during the orientation program and you are encouraged to keep it for future reference. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this handbook; however, some information may change over time. You are encouraged to verify information by reviewing the relevant policy which can be located on the agency intranet, speaking with your supervisor or by calling the Human Resource Section.

Congratulations and much success to you in your career decision to become a member of the ADVA team.

David Fletcher  
Director

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
General Information Regarding the Agency, History and Organization Structure.....	2
Department of Veterans Affairs Organizational Chart.....	4
Mission Statement.....	5

## General Employment Information

Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Statement.....	7
At-Will-Employer.....	7
Job Qualifications and Job Descriptions.....	8
Employee Orientation.....	8
Initial Probationary Employment.....	8
Employment Status.....	9
Pay Procedures.....	9
Salary Determination and Job Classification.....	9
General Work Regulations.....	10
Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).....	10
General Guidelines for Overtime.....	11
Time Sheets.....	11
Job Postings.....	12
Employee Self Service in AASIS.....	12

## **Employee Regulations**

Attendance and Absenteeism.....	13
Work Schedules, Meal Period and Breaks.....	13
Physical Fitness.....	13
Sexual Harassment.....	13
Inclement Weather.....	14
Drug-Free Workplace.....	14
Tobacco Free Environment.....	15
Nepotism.....	15
Other Employment.....	15
Whistle Blower Act.....	15
Vehicle Safety Program.....	16
Legal Assistance and Professional Liability.....	17

## **Employee Performance and Job Development**

Personnel File.....	18
Employee Performance File.....	18
Performance Evaluation.....	18
Merit Increase Pay System.....	18
Service Awards.....	19
Training Opportunities.....	20
On-the-Job-Training.....	20
Cross Training.....	20

Disciplinary Procedures.....	20
Grievance and Complaint Procedures.....	20

## **Employee Benefits**

Legal Holidays.....	21
Annual Leave.....	22
Educational Leave Benefit .....	22
Sick Leave.....	23
Military Leave.....	24
Maternity Leave.....	24
Court and Jury Leave.....	25
Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).....	25
Leave Without Pay (LWOP).....	26
Catastrophic Leave Bank Program.....	26
Workers' Compensation.....	27
Deferred Compensation.....	27
Employee Assistance Program (EAP).....	27
Savings Bonds.....	28
Retirement.....	28
Credit Union.....	28
Arkansas State Employee's Association (ASEA).....	28
State Employee Suggestion System.....	29
Chemical Right-to-Know.....	29
Health Insurance.....	29

## **ADVA Policy**

General Guidance on ADVA Policies and Procedures.....	30
Required Policies and Acknowledgements.....	30
CODE OF ETHICS AND RULES OF CONDUCT.....	31

### **Acknowledgement Forms**

Acknowledgment of Code of Ethics Annual  
Acknowledgment of Reporting Suspected Fraud  
Acknowledgement of ADVA Policies  
Acknowledgement of Employee Handbook  
Acknowledgement of the Drug Free Workplace Policy  
Acknowledgement of Employee Discipline Policy  
Acknowledgement of Employee Grievance Policy  
Acknowledgement of Whistle-Blower Policy  
Acknowledgment of Disciplinary Rules and Procedures

## **Introduction**

The ADVA provides equal employment opportunities and human resources is designed to support the mission of the agency and provide assistance that will enable supervisors and employees to perform their job duties and responsibilities at the highest possible level. Services will be provided in compliance with State and Federal guidelines. Should you need personnel assistance, please contact Human Resources at (501) 992-0306 and one of the staff will be glad to assist you.

The objective for this portion of the new employee orientation is to familiarize you with the policies, procedures and practices that pertain to you as an ADVA employee. As we go through this information, please feel free to ask questions at the appropriate time.

By accepting ADVA employment, you agree to conform to the policies and procedures of ADVA including any changes, deletions, and/or additions to these policies and procedures during the course of your employment. ADVA reserves the right to make changes in the content of the application of its policies and procedures and this book as deemed necessary. These changes may be implemented even if they have not been communicated, reprinted, or substituted in this book. You should not rely on any oral or written statements contrary to what your employment application, this book and/or the ADVA policies state. Should information presented in this book conflict with ADVA official policies, the official policy will govern. Questions about the information contained in this book or any policy or procedure should be discussed now or directed to your immediate supervisor for assistance and/or explanation.

# AR DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

## **Enabling Laws**

Act 2272 Of 2005  
A.C.A. §20-81-102 et seq.

## **History and Organization**

Act 343 of 1925 created our agency as the Arkansas Service Bureau to aid World War Veterans and Veterans of American Wars to obtain government benefits and for other purposes.

Act 234 of 1945 renamed our agency to the Arkansas Veterans Service Office and changed our responsibilities to assisting all veterans and their dependents in securing their rights and benefits under all laws, both State and Federal.

Act 536 of 1975 appropriated funds to the Arkansas Veterans Service Office for assisting the seventy-five (75) counties in paying salaries and/or expenses of County Veterans Service Officers who meet the training qualifications, the scheduled numbers of working hours per month and other qualifications prescribed or as may be prescribed by our office.

Act 377 of 1975 created the Governor's Task Force on Veterans Affairs to study any and all matters relating to and affecting the affairs of veterans in the state of Arkansas as requested by the Governor or as deemed necessary by the Task Force, and to make recommendations to the Governor on request or as deemed appropriate by the majority of the members of the Task Force.

Act 619 of 1977 authorized the Arkansas Veterans Service Office to establish and maintain an Arkansas Veterans Home in the building formerly used by the School for the Blind and Deaf located at 20th and Madison Streets, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Act 324 of 1979, codified in A.C.A. §20-81-102 et seq., renamed our agency as the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs, which would assume all the duties and responsibilities of the Arkansas Veterans Service Office as well as to supervise the operation of the Arkansas Veterans Home; supervise the activities, training and testing of all the County Veterans Service Officers in each county and to create a Governors Task Force on Veterans Affairs.

Act 432 of 1985, codified in A.C.A. §20-81-105, amended Section 6 of Act 324 of 1979 to require the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs to promulgate guidelines for admission to the Arkansas Veterans Home and to conform to Federal requirements necessary to qualify the Arkansas Veterans Home as a Nursing Home and Domiciliary for veterans.

Act 431 of 1985, codified in A.C.A. §20-81-107, authorized the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs to accept the donation of real property for use as Veterans Cemeteries.

Act 157 of 1987, codified in A.C.A. §20-81-105, amended Section 6 of Act 324 of 1979 to provide for the conversion of the Arkansas Veterans Home to a Nursing Home and Domiciliary for veterans



without the necessity of obtaining a certificate of need.

Act 733 of 1987 appropriated funds to supplement private donations for expansion of the Little Rock, Fayetteville and Fort Smith National Cemeteries.

Act 670 of 1991, amended A.C.A. §20-81-104(b)(4) to authorize members of the Governor's Task Force on Veterans Affairs to attend conventions, conferences or meetings of recognized veterans organizations.

Act 136 of 1993 amended A.C.A. §20-81-104 to change the name of the Governor's Task Force on Veterans Affairs to the Governor's Commission on Veterans Affairs.

Act 719 of 1993 amended A.C.A. §20-81-103 regarding the qualifications for appointment of the Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Act 235 of 1997 amended A.C.A. §20-81-112 by authorizing the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs to establish and operate an Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery system.

### MISSION

The mission of this agency is to ensure that veterans, their dependents and survivors receive the maximum benefits to which they are entitled under federal and state laws.

### SERVICES PERFORMED

Assist veterans, their dependents and survivors in their claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) for benefits they are entitled to under Title 38, United States Code.

Supervise the activities, training and testing of a network of County Veterans Service Officers (CVSOs). There are 75 counties with county veterans service officers who are trained and supervised by this agency to serve veterans, their dependents and survivors.

Establish, implement and maintain a program for providing financial assistance to counties to help defray the salaries and/or expenses of the CVSOs.

Establish, operate and maintain the Arkansas Veterans' Cemetery system.

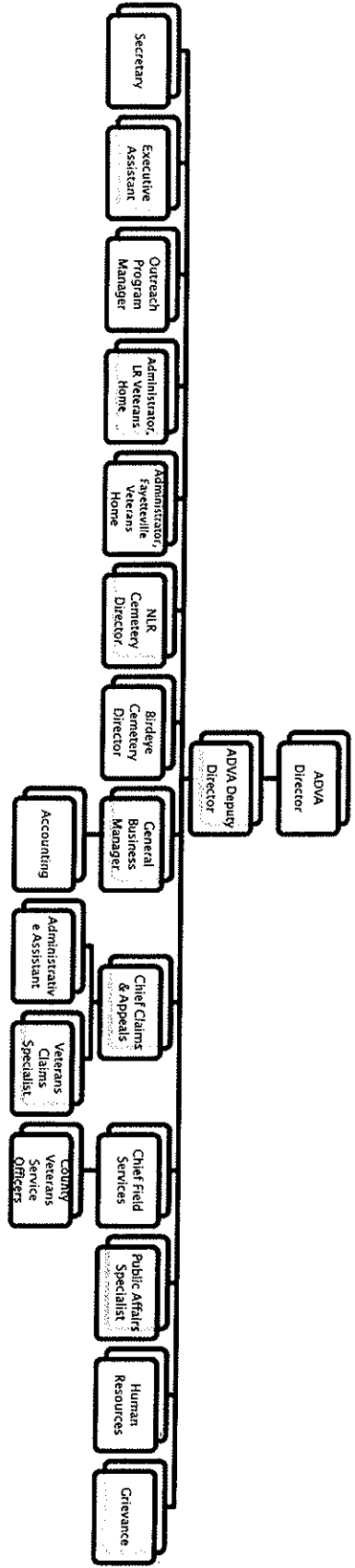
Maintain the Little Rock Veterans Home, which houses a 61-bed intermediate care nursing facility and a 55-bed Veterans Domiciliary facility. This facility, which was opened in 1980, serves honorably discharged veterans who have become disabled and are unemployable.

Maintain the new Fayetteville Veterans Home that opened in June 2006 and houses a 108 bed skilled care and intermediate care nursing facility.

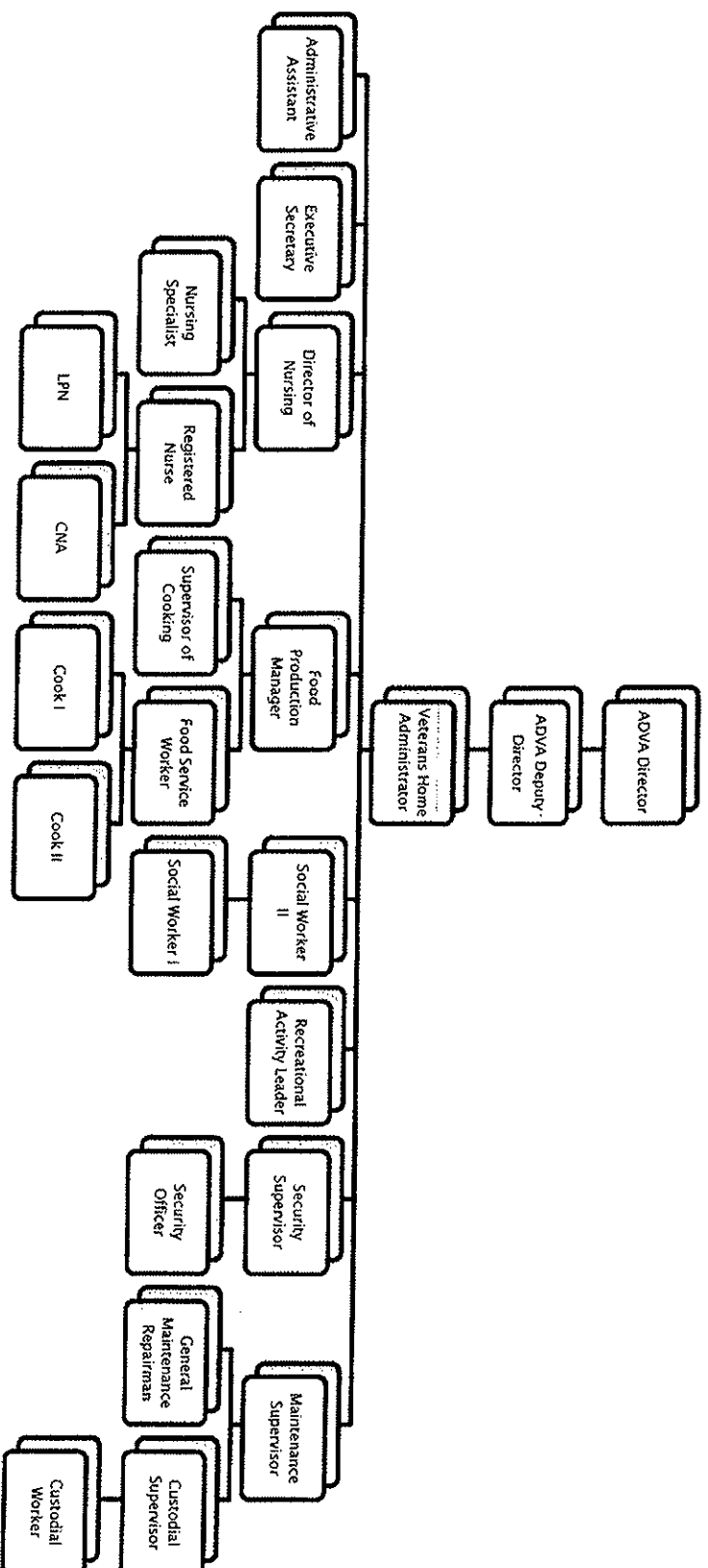
Participate on such boards, committees and/or projects which relate to the Agency's mission or as directed by a competent state authority.

To promulgate rules and regulations as deemed necessary.

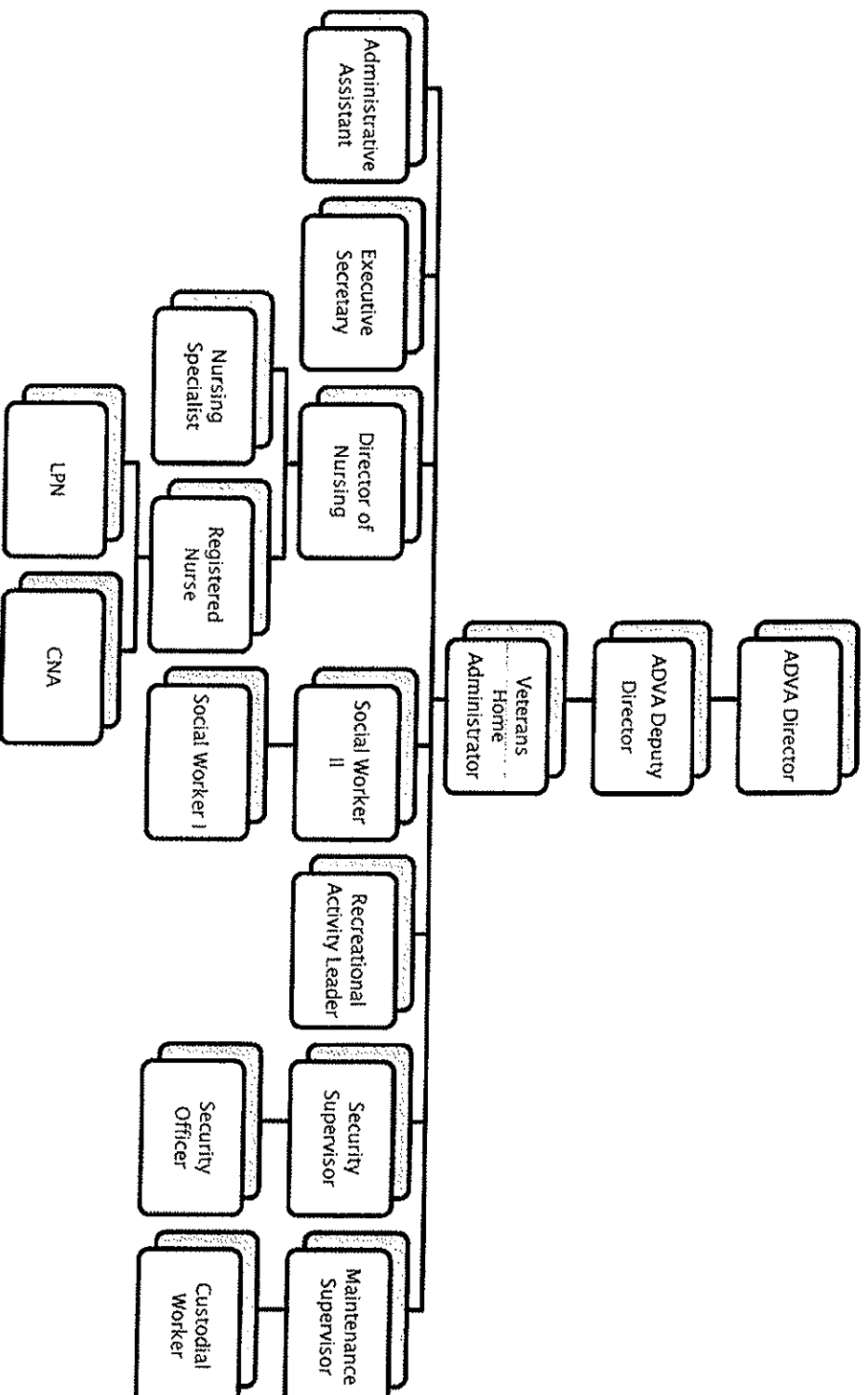
# Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs



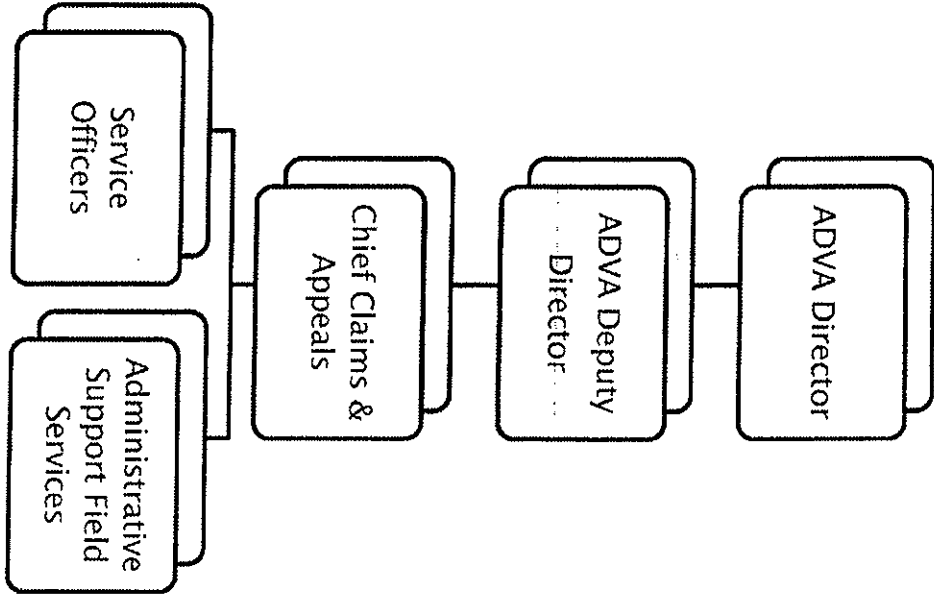
# Arkansas Veterans Home



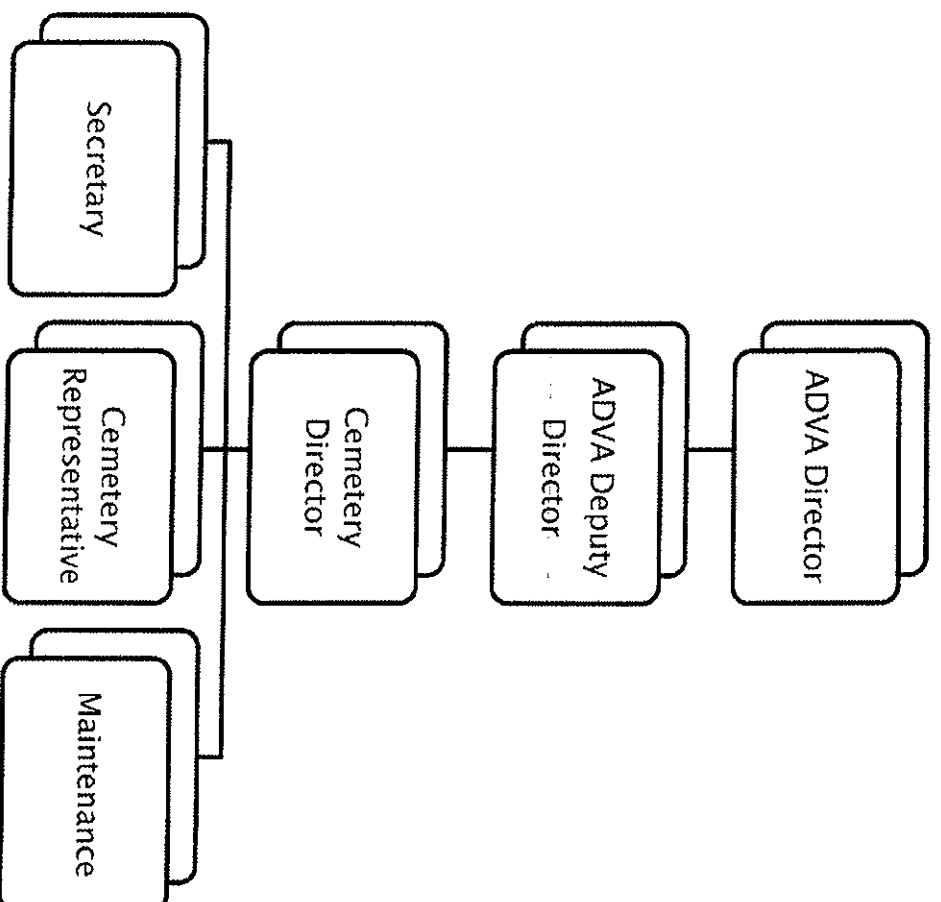
# Fayetteville Veterans Home



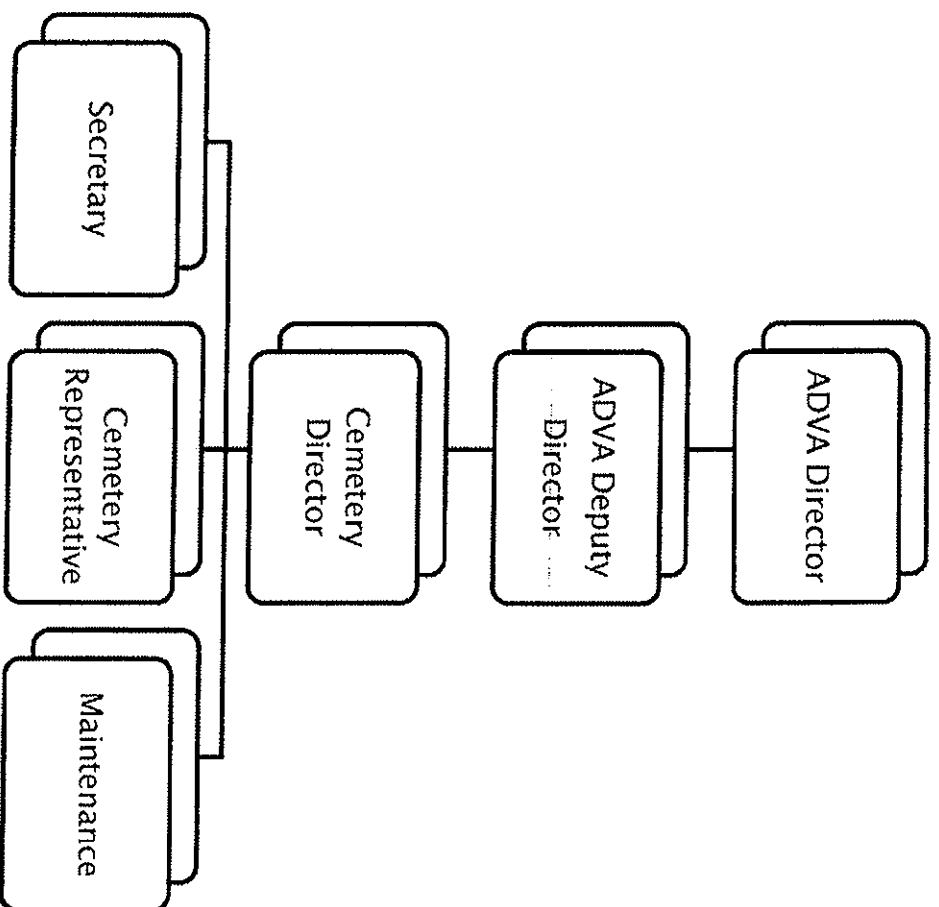
Claims/Appeals/Field Services



## Birdeye Cemetery



# NLR Cemetery





## STATE OF ARKANSAS

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1501 W. Maryland Ave.  
North Little Rock, AR 72120  
(501) 992-0306 / FAX (501) 992-0162

Mike Beebe  
Governor

David Fletcher  
Director

### ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) is a state agency established to assist veterans, their families and survivors in processing claims with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Additionally, ADVA maintains the Arkansas Veterans Home, a domiciliary and nursing home for disabled or aging veterans. The department was created by the Legislature as the Arkansas Service Bureau through Act 127 of 1923 (as amended).

The agency consists of three basic units, Veterans Service, Veterans Home and Veterans Cemetery. The Veterans Service function is divided between the Field Service Section, which has representatives in the Little Rock and Fayetteville VA Medical Centers and monitors County Veteran Service Officers employed by all 75 counties; and the Claims Section which handles the filing and (if necessary) the appeal of individual claims for VA benefits. ADVA is accredited to represent claimants in all phases of VA procedures and acts not only under its own authority, but also as the functional representative of The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Marine Corps League, Fleet Reserve Association, Veterans of World War I, Catholic War Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, Blinded Veterans Association, American Ex-Prisoners of War, and Non-Commissioned Officers Association.

The staff of ADVA maintains an accurate and up-to-date understanding of the legal and medical procedures and terminology involved in all aspects of the claims process. They maintain high standards of competence in order to assist in all areas from initial counseling through appellate advocacy. Additionally, the Field Services Section provides an extensive ongoing system for training and advising the County Veteran Service Officers on current procedures.

The Arkansas Veterans Home was founded in Little Rock in 1980 as a domiciliary providing a meaningful living environment of honorably discharged veterans. The Home provides all living, dining, recreation, and medical facilities necessary for a comfortable and safe life-style in a modern setting. In October of 1988 the Veterans Home expanded to include intermediate level nursing home care to further serve the needs of veterans. A special brochure containing more detailed information is available from [www.veterans.arkansas.gov](http://www.veterans.arkansas.gov).

Officials broke ground for the Fayetteville Veterans Home on September 3, 2004. We welcomed our first resident on June 21, 2006. This licensed Medicaid/Medicare 108 bed skilled care nursing facility, provides a comfortable and supportive atmosphere for our veterans.



The Arkansas State Veterans' Cemetery was authorized by Act 235 of 1997 in North Little Rock; Construction for the first phase was in November, 2001. The State Cemetery provides a final resting place for all eligible veterans, spouses and dependent children, to be maintained in a manner that reflects respect for the veterans and their family members. A brochure containing more detailed information is available from ADVA, [www.veterans.arkansas.gov](http://www.veterans.arkansas.gov).

(Little Rock) Governor Mike Beebe announced at the Capitol July 8, 2008 the purchase of land in Cross County for a new Veterans cemetery. Approximately 100 agricultural property acres was purchased by the state for \$150,000. The cemetery will be located near Birdseye off Hwy. 163. The cemetery is expected to be operational in 2011 and should be able to accommodate burials for at least 120 years.

All services of the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs are available without charge (except for residents in Veterans' Home and without regard to membership or affiliation with any group or organization).

For further information, contact your local County Veteran Service Officer or ADVA at the address/number listed above.

THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
SERVICE THE NEEDS OF VETERANS SINCE 1923

# **General Employment Information**

## **Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Statement**

In keeping with the mission of the ADVA, the agency desires to employ individuals who are dependable, professional, of good character, and sincerely interested in serving the mission of the agency.

The ADVA is an equal opportunity employer, providing equal employment opportunities without regard to race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status or other biases prohibited by State or federal law. This policy and practice relate to all phases of employment including, but not limited to recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, layoff, recall, termination, compensation, training, use of all facilities and participation in employee activities and programs. All members of ADVA management staff are familiar with this statement of policy, the philosophy behind it and their responsibility to apply these principles in good faith for meaningful progress in the utilization of minorities and women. ADVA follows the administrative directive regarding equal opportunity and affirmative action which can be located on the policy ADVA web page.

## **At-Will-Employer**

The ADVA is an "at-will" employer. Nothing in this document or policies and procedures establishes, constitutes, or implies an employment contract, the guarantee of employment or benefits, or employment for any specific duration. Nothing contained in ADVA policies, handbooks, applications, or other documents, or the granting of any interview or the placement in a probationary status or any other administrative act, creates a contract between an individual and ADVA for either employment or the provision of benefits. The ADVA does not guarantee continued employment for any specific period of time and employment can be terminated with or without cause, and with or without notice, at any time, at the option of either the ADVA or the employee. Individuals hired will also be required to provide proof of eligibility to work in the United States pursuant to the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

## **Job Qualifications and Job Description**

As new employees, you have been hired to perform a specific set of duties that are associated with that specific job classification. All job classifications, qualifications, and the pay range associated with a position are established by the State of Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Personnel Management (OPM). OPM is responsible for managing the State Classification and Compensation System. This includes classifying positions, evaluating jobs, developing classification and standards specifications, assigning pay grades to classifications, collecting salary data, developing and administering pay plan policies and procedures, developing and administering performance evaluation procedures and providing professional assistance and guidance related to personnel management. You can find more information on your job specifications at the DFA web site located at [www.arkansas.gov/dfa/personnel\\_mgmt/opm\\_classcodes](http://www.arkansas.gov/dfa/personnel_mgmt/opm_classcodes) or you may contact the HRS.

ADVA fills all positions through a process of team interviews, individual ranking of the interviews by the interview team, and assessment of the qualifications as prescribed in the job classifications. During your initial week of employment, your supervisor will have provided you with a job description listing specific responsibilities of the position. You are responsible for performing the duties and activities assigned to you.

## **Employee Orientation**

New ADVA employees must attend the new employee orientation program. Usually a Phase I-A will be conducted on the first day of employment. In this phase, information will be shared as necessary to begin your employment with ADVA. Activities such as completing tax forms, insurance documents, fingerprinting, etc., will be completed during this time. You will be administered Phase I-B when you return to your local office, and upon completion, you will be scheduled for Phase II.

## **Initial Probationary Employment**

You are placed in a "probationary" status for the first twelve (12) months of employment as an ADVA employee. If you are being transferred within ADVA or promoted into a new position, a six (6) month probation period is imposed.

The purpose of the probationary period is to determine your suitability for the position. At six (6) months a performance appraisal will be completed between you and your supervisor to assess your performance and determine if additional training is needed. Even if the probation period is satisfied, the employment at will doctrine still applies.

### **Employment Status**

For the purpose of Fair Labor Standards, employees of the ADVA fall into one of the categories below.

**Exempt** - employees (usually supervisor or managers) within ADVA that are paid a set salary.

**Non-exempt** –employees who work a 40 hour week and are paid overtime at the rate of time and one half the usual rate of pay for hours physically worked in excess of 40 in a week. The overtime earned is banked in lieu of pay.

**Extra Help** – temporary employees who work 1,000 hours or less in fiscal year. They are eligible for overtime like the non-exempt employee. The only benefit they receive is paid time off for holidays when the work schedule qualifies them.

If questions arise, contact your immediate supervisor.

### **Pay Procedures**

Pay is issued by the State of Arkansas twenty-six (26) times each year on a bi-weekly basis. Effective August 12, 2005, a condition of employment, a person hired or appointed to ADVA is required to accept payment of salary or wages by electronic warrants transfer (direct deposit) to the employee's financial bank account.

New hires must complete the Mandatory Direct Deposit Notification Form at the time of the job interview. The direct deposit requirement does not apply to a person who is in the employment of the state prior to August 12, 2005 and subsequently receive a promotion appointment, transfer, or other change in position within the same personnel system on or after August 12, 2005. All deposit authorizations are done at the time of the Phase I-A orientation. Changes to the authorizations can be done anytime by contacting your payroll processing clerk or contacting the Human Resources Section.

### **Salary Determination and Job Classification**

The Uniform Classification and Compensation Act established a classification and pay system for state agencies. This code and subsequent amendments established classifications of work and assigned pay grades to each classification. It also established procedures and controls to assure compliance with the provisions of the code and its' amendments. The code also vested authority to monitor the application of these procedures in the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The rate of pay to which a classified employee is entitled is established under current law. Employees entering State service for the first time will be paid at Entry Level of the grade assigned to the classification entered unless a special entry rate has been approved prior to the hire date. The ADVA complies with this and all laws.

## **General Work Regulations**

Most regular salary full time employees are scheduled to work at least 5, 8 hour days (forty hour week) unless otherwise authorized by the Governor. Veterans Homes are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Regardless where or when you work in ADVA, you as an employee are expected to begin work on time. You are expected to promptly leave your work station at the end of your scheduled work day. If there is a need to work before your usual start time or beyond your usual stop time, your supervisor will give you ample notice.

Non-exempt employees are not authorized to work outside regular work schedules unless overtime is approved by the supervisor in advance. Employees who are "exempt by classification" are expected to work whatever hours necessary to accomplish their jobs when overtime is approved or directed. This may require working more than an eight hour day or more than forty hours in a work week.

## **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a Federal law that affects overtime pay; minimum wage and child labor laws. All employees of this ADVA must comply with FLSA. The FLSA does not cover vacation, holiday, severance or sick pay, premium pay for weekend or holiday work, double time, pay raises, or fringe benefits.

You will be informed of your FLSA status during the first day of orientation. Arkansas Code §19-41612, states, "Overtime. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State of Arkansas that overtime pay for state employees is the least desirable method of compensation for overtime work." The Code further states that "all state departments, agencies, boards, commissions and institutions may pay overtime to its employees, under the rules and regulations set out by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act." Also the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), as amended, were adopted and implemented as the basic wage and hour policy of the state. Further, it is policy of the State that any overtime work necessary to the continued effective operations of the State shall be managed in the most efficient and economic manner possible.

Compensatory time is defined as time physically worked in excess of forty (40) hours in the work week. Compensatory time may not be earned nor taken in less than fifteen (15) minute increments.

Except for certain categories of workers, e.g., fire fighters and law enforcement, etc., whose positions receive partial overtime exemptions, all employees performing qualifying nonexempt work within a work week will accrue compensatory time at the rate of one and one-half times the number of hours worked in excess of 40 hours.

Nonexempt employees are eligible for compensatory time in lieu of cash overtime payment.

There are two categories of nonexempt employees:

- Those whose normal work period is a 40 hour work week, and;
- Those employees who, by virtue of their job activities, are considered:
  - Seasonal
  - Fire Protection, or
  - Law Enforcement

Those employees in Category B are not on a regularly scheduled 40 hour work week, but have pre-established periods from 7 to 28 days in length. If an agency pays its employees for overtime in the form of compensatory time off as opposed to cash payment, the following points must be noted:

- The employees in Category A cannot accrue more than 240 hours in compensatory time off.
- The employees in Category B cannot accrue more than 480 hours in compensatory time off.

If an employee in either category exceeds the maximum established, they must be compensated in cash payment at the rate of time and one-half for any hours in excess of the 240/480 limit.

Compensatory time must be earned before it can be used. The time used will be deducted from the employee's accrued compensatory time. All compensatory time of fifteen (15) minutes or more must be accounted for, whether earned or used.

When an employee uses earned compensatory time, he/she shall be paid at the base rate of pay of his/her current grade.

Compensatory time may be earned only with the prior approval of the Director, or his/her designee.

Employees shall request to use earned compensatory time by completing a request for leave form. ADVA can require the employee to use any and all accrued compensatory time.

Upon termination from employment, the employee is to receive cash payment for any overtime accrued which has not been used at a rate not less than:

- The average regular rate received by an employee during the last three (3) years of his/her employment; or
- The final regular rate of pay received by an employee, whichever is higher.

### **General Guidelines for Overtime**

Employees may not work overtime unless authorized in advance to do so by their supervisor. Arriving early and staying late without permission is prohibited. Your supervisor will try to give you reasonable notice when the need for overtime work arises. Please remember, however, that advance notice may not always be possible. ADVA employees receive leave on the books in lieu of cash payment. Overtime is only earned when the physical time worked extends beyond the usual scheduled work period. A combination of paid leave and hours worked cannot be used to earn overtime. The time must be physically worked.

### **Time Sheets**

A bi-weekly time sheet must be kept for every non-exempt employee. It is state and federal law that accurate work records are kept of every hour the employee works and the earned leave time taken. Falsification of a time sheet is a breach of State government policy and is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Your immediate supervisor and or time keeper will instruct you on how and when the time sheet is to be completed. Completing your time sheet and getting it turned in to your time keeper is your responsibility. Should you make an error on your time sheet, notify your supervisor immediately. If you neglect to turn in your time sheet, you will not get paid.

## Job Postings

The ADVA is an equal opportunity employer. The recruiting activities that we perform include but are not limited job postings. Job postings are currently made on the state web site [www.arstatejobs.com](http://www.arstatejobs.com) as well as appropriate newspapers, and publications. The minimum requirements for any job are posted and must be met without exception. Additional job postings are made on the agency intranet and /or email system. Job postings will usually result in one of the three following actions for ADVA employees:

Upon **promotion**, a change to a higher grade with significantly higher job duties, an employee's salary shall be calculated as follows:

- For a promotion to a position of a higher grade on the same pay plan, the employee's maximum rate of pay shall be increased by 10%.
- For a promotion from a position on the career service pay plan to a position on the professional and executive pay plan, the employee's rate of pay shall be increased by 12%.

An employee who is **demoted** for cause or voluntarily solicits a demotion of one or more grades on the career service pay plan or on the professional and executive pay plan, the employee's pay rate shall be lowered by 10%.

Upon demotion from a position on the professional and executive pay plan to a position on the career services pay plan, an employee's pay rate shall be reduced by 12%.

A **lateral transfer** is a move from one classified position to another with the same grade, salary and title with no change in eligibility date. This action must be approved by the losing and gaining immediate supervisor and reviewing official.

## Employee Self Service in AASIS

The Arkansas Administrative Statewide Information System (AASIS) is used throughout the State of Arkansas to process payroll and other related accounting type transactions. Through this system is how you as an employee receive your pay. Your pay is automatically deposited directly into an account which you have designated. There is not a "pay stub" as it has been called but you can access your remuneration statement through this system by going to <http://www.arkansas.gov/dfa/aasis/>.

Your supervisor and or time keeper will assist you in contacting HRS to secure a required password.

# **Employee Regulations**

## **Attendance and Absenteeism**

- Employees of the ADVA are expected to regularly and consistently be at their work stations at the designated time their work begins, unless on approved leave.
- Employees must notify their supervisors, in advance, if they can't attend work as scheduled. If the supervisor cannot be reached, the employee should notify the next level supervisor.
- Employees must give the reasons for absences and indicate when they expect to return to work. If an employee does not know when he/she will return, he/she must notify the supervisor each day of their absence, at or before the normal starting time.
- Employees failing to make this notification are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Employees who are on Sick Leave for five or more consecutive days must furnish a certificate of illness from an attending physician or a recognized Christian Science practitioner. This note must verify the employee's illness during the specific time away and indicate when the employee may return to work, if there are work restrictions and when the restrictions will be removed.
- Supervisors may ask for a doctor's certificate at anytime if it is suspected that an employee is abusing Sick Leave. Employees who do not report for work for three consecutive work days, without contacting his/her immediate supervisor will be terminated.

## **Work Schedules, Meal Period and Breaks**

Work schedules, meal periods and breaks are scheduled to provide consistent and adequate coverage. It is required that you report to your assigned duty station and be ready for work when the work schedule begins. A fifteen minute break each morning and afternoon is a privilege and may be given or not given by the supervisor depending on work requirements each day. If awarded, they are usually 15 minutes in length and the break begins when you leave your duty station and ends when you return. Breaks are paid time away from your job so do not abuse them. Breaks may not be used to add to lunch periods or change work day starting and ending times. Meal periods are non paid times and begin when you leave your duty station and end when you return. Absenteeism and tardy rules apply to all the above.

## **Physical Fitness**

Employees should maintain healthy lifestyles and be physically and mentally fit for duty. To encourage and facilitate employee involvement in fitness activities, a voluntary program is available allowing you 30 minutes daily, combining both morning and afternoon breaks, to participate in such activities that contribute to maintaining or achieving good physical health; upon supervisory approval. There are restrictions on the use of time, so you are expected to review the policy and its implementation with your supervisor prior to taking any time.

## **Sexual Harassment**

ADVA provides an environment where employees can work together comfortably and productively, free from sexual and other forms of harassment. Sexual harassment is prohibited by state and federal law



and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment of fellow employees or offenders will result in disciplinary actions which may include termination. In addition to sexual harassment, ADVA has a zero tolerance policy toward any sexual misconduct in a residential facility. These policies can be located on the ADVA Website.

### **Inclement Weather**

In general, ADVA does not close its offices during bad weather. However, pursuant to a Governor's Policy Directive the following policy is in force to attempt to provide for the safety of employees, and eliminate confusion during bad weather:

If severe weather strikes in the early morning, employees should listen to radio or local television to hear whether the Governor's Office declares the day to be an "Inclement Weather Day." On days declared to be "inclement weather days," all employees who can get to work without undue personal risk should do so and be at their work stations no later than 9:30 a.m. Employees arriving by 9:30 a.m. will be given credit for a full day's attendance. Employees arriving after 9:30 a.m. will be charged the amount of the time they were late in arriving (counting from the regular starting time), and employees not coming to work at all will be charged a full day's absence.

When severe weather occurs during office hours, the Director has the discretion to allow employees to leave work early for safety reasons.

### **Drug-Free Workplace**

The ADVA maintains a drug free workplace. Employees, interns, and volunteers are prohibited from the unlawful manufacture, purchase, distribution, dispensing, possession, and use of prohibited drugs and consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during the work day. Violators are subject to discipline up to and including termination. All ADVA employees are subject to random and reasonable suspicion testing. Details about the ADVA Drug-Free workplace can be found in the policy on the ADVA Website.

### **Tobacco Free Environment**

It is ADVA policy to provide a tobacco-free environment for the health and safety of staff and veterans. Tobacco products are any smoking or smokeless tobacco product. Smoking designations are set up at each facility. Please see your immediate supervisor for approved smoking areas.

### **Nepotism**

Relatives of employees may not work in the same line of supervision whereby one relative supervises the other or has authority to hire, transfer, suspend, lay-off, recall, promote discharge or assign the other. "Relative" means husband, wife, mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter, son, stepdaughter, stepson, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, or niece. For further details please consult the ADVA Website under policies.

### **Other Employment**

You may not work at outside jobs during the time you are scheduled to be working for ADVA. You may not have outside jobs which create a "conflict of interest" as defined by State law. Otherwise, you may have outside jobs. However, you may be dismissed because of poor work performance if the outside job conflicts with ADVA employment. If secondary employment is desired, complete the Secondary Employment Agreement Form discuss it with your supervisor and obtain approval.

**CONCURRENT EMPLOYMENT:** Concurrent employment is when an ADVA employee simultaneously works for two or more state institutions. Also, under certain circumstances, an employee may be concurrently employed by the same institution/agency. The employee's combined salary payments from the institution/agency is not to exceed the larger maximum annual salary of the line-item position authorized for either institution/agency from which the employee is being paid. Employees who perform services for their primary employer (one having control over the employee's services) outside regularly scheduled hours of work may be paid additional compensation if such services constitute independent, additional duties over and above those of the employee's primary position within the institution/agency. Additional compensation will be allowed only when the services rendered are clearly not a part of the employee's regular (primary) job. Such additional services must meet the criteria as specified in Arkansas Code Annotated §§ 6-63-307 & 19-4-1604. All concurrent employment requests are subject to the approval of the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State prior to implementation.

### **Whistle Blower Act**

ADVA shall not take adverse action against an employee because the employee, or a person authorized to act on behalf of the employee, communicates in good faith the existence of waste of public funds, property, or manpower, including federal funds, property, or manpower, administered or controlled by a public employer or a violation or suspected violation of a law, rule, or regulation adopted under the law of this State or a political subdivision of the state to an appropriate authority. The communication may be made at a time and in a manner which gives the public employer reasonable notice of need to correct the waste or violation.

“Whistle-blower” means a person who witnesses or has evidence of a waste or violation while employed with a state agency or institution of higher education and who communicates, in good faith, or testifies to, the waste or violation, verbally or in writing, to one of the employee's superiors, to an agent of the public employer or to an appropriate authority, provided that the communication is made prior to any adverse action by the employer. For further information, refer to the Whistle Blower policy on the ADVA Website.

### **Vehicle Safety Program**

The purpose of this program is to reduce State insurance costs and loss of employee work time due to accidents.

- 1 If you are authorized to operate an agency or private vehicle to conduct ADVA business, you must maintain a valid driver's license in accordance with the requirements of applicable Arkansas State laws. You must complete and sign the Authorization to Operate State Vehicles and Private Vehicles on State Business, VSP-1, to periodically obtain “Traffic Violations Reports”. You must also provide a photocopy of your drivers' licenses.
- 2 If you operate or you ride as a passenger in a State vehicle equipped with seatbelts, you are required to wear them. Also when driving a personal vehicle on State business and receiving mileage reimbursement.
- 3 You must maintain the required liability insurance on the personal vehicle you use to conduct ADVA business.
- 4 You must report, in writing, all accidents or traffic violations occurring in a State vehicle within 24 hours or by the next business day and if driving a personal vehicle on State business within 7 days of occurrence. See the Vehicle Safety Policy.
- 5 If you have had an at-fault accident you must attend a Defensive Driving Class within 60 days following the accident.

The ADVA will use the traffic violation point system to identify high risk drivers. Depending on the number and severity of your traffic violations or accidents, you may lose the right to operate a State vehicle. Your employment may be terminated if driving is an essential function of your job, and your driving record reflects poor performance.

### **Legal Assistance and Professional Liability**

The Arkansas Attorney General's Office will represent you if you are sued in your "official capacity". An "official capacity" claim against you is a claim against the office or position you hold or held at the time of the event in question. The claim would be considered as a claim against the State of Arkansas, and therefore cannot result in any personal judgment against you that would be satisfied by any of your personal assets. Neither the ADVA nor the State of Arkansas will provide legal assistance in personal matters or matters that do not pertain to your job duties during your work hours.

ADVA employees must comply with and follow the procedures in the administrative directive on Legal Documents or they may be held personally liable. If you are involved in a job-related legal matter, you are required to fully cooperate with the ADVA legal counsel and others as required.

# Employee Performance and Job Development

## Personnel File

The Human Resource Section (HRS) maintains an official personnel file on each employee. You may review your personnel files by contacting the HRS to make an appointment.

To make sure your personnel file is up-to-date, notify your supervisor or the HRS of any changes in your name, telephone number, home address, marital status, number of dependents, individuals to notify in case of emergency and so forth.

## Employee Performance File

A file of work performance will be maintained by your immediate supervisor including such information concerning decisions about such things as Performance Appraisal ratings and recommendations for pay increases, promotions, enrollment in special training courses, or disciplinary actions. It is very important that you maintain a performance file as well so when it is time to complete the employee input part of the performance evaluation process, you will have the information documented in your file as well. Completed and approved performance appraisal documents are maintained in the HRS.

## Performance Evaluation

The ADVA administers an employee performance evaluation system which encourages communication between raters and employees and measures performance. The employee performance evaluation system will operate within legal parameters and guidelines in the ADVA Administrative Directive on Performance Evaluation (PE).

Review this policy which is located at [www.veterans.arkansas.gov](http://www.veterans.arkansas.gov). If there are questions, please consult your immediate supervisor or HRS.

## Merit Increase Pay System

The merit increase system is a performance-based pay system which incorporates pay and performance evaluation standards and establishes criteria for salary adjustments for employees who meet requisite performance categories. Merit payments may be awarded to employees who satisfy performance-based criteria.

To qualify for a merit pay increase, an employee must meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

- a. The employee has not laterally transferred, been promoted, involuntary or voluntarily demoted within the last six months; **AND** has been in continuous employment with the state in either a classified or unclassified regular full-time position for 12 months since October 1, 2006 (*this employee has an increase eligibility date of October 1 throughout the remainder of their continuous state employment*); **OR** the employee is a rehire or employee who has not accumulated twelve months of continuous state

employment by October 1, 2007 (*this employee's latest hire date in state employment will be their merit increase eligibility date for each year of continuous state employment*); **OR** the employee is on extended leave (such as military or extended military, and catastrophic leave or leave with pay) and has accumulated at least six months of actual work experience (*after the merit pay cycle in which the employee was on extended leave is completed, this employee's merit increase eligibility date reverts to October 1 or the latest hire, date whichever is appropriate*): **AND**

- b. The employee met the annual training requirements; **AND**
- c. The employee has not been disciplined for a violation of the Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct; **AND**
- d. The employee has a PE score equivalent of "satisfactory" or above; and, if applicable.
- e. The employee is a supervisor and has completed all required PE reviews and submitted them on the employees he/she supervises to Human Resources in a timely manner.

Employees who receive an overall "satisfactory" rating shall be eligible for a 1.5% merit increase.

Employees who receive an overall "above average" rating shall be eligible for a 3.0% merit increase.

Employees who receive an overall "exceed standards" rating shall be eligible for a 4.5% merit increase.

Your immediate supervisor will cover this and other related issues with you.

Employees who transfer laterally, are promoted, or are demoted, either voluntarily or involuntarily, within an agency or to another agency or institution will be eligible to receive an annual merit increase on their merit increase date if 1) they have completed six months of service in their new position and 2) all of the conditions as outlined in the above paragraph are met.

### **Service Awards**

The following awards are offered by the state of Arkansas and ADVA:

#### **State Awards**

Governor's Service Recognition Certificates of recognition for full-time employees for service of 10, 20, and 30 years.

Career Service Recognition Bonuses are awarded to state employees on their eligibility date for continuous service in full-time positions as follows:

10 through 14 years of service -\$600  
15 through 19 years of service -\$700  
20 through 24 years of service -\$800  
25 or more years of service -\$900

### **Training Opportunities**

Employees should be given opportunities to improve and expand their skills once they have mastered the basic job duties, to help prepare them for advancement or promotion. Employees will be encouraged and sometimes required to participate in training.

### **On-the-Job-Training**

You may work under the supervision of a trained employee without leaving the work site or disrupting work schedules to acquire a standard level of competency on a newly assigned job.

### **Cross Training**

Certain employees may be given the opportunity, or in some cases, required to learn a new skill outside their current responsibilities. ADVA encourages this type of opportunity so that employees may become more "promotable" or be prepared to temporarily step into a new position in the event of an emergency. Cross training is generally handled at the work location under the supervision of a well-trained employee.

### **Grievance and Complaint Procedures**

Every employee of the Department is entitled to fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory treatment in all aspects of employment. An eligible employee who believes he/she is a victim of unfair or discriminatory treatment may seek relief through the grievance or complaint procedures. Employees who use these procedures may do so without restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination or fear of future reprisal, however, employees must have reasonable evidence which can be substantiated to avoid false or malicious claims.

For a complete explanation of ADVA's grievance procedure see the Administrative Regulation titled "Employee Grievance Procedure" and the Administrative Directive titled "Employee Grievance and Mediation Procedure" found on the ADVA Website.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

If an employee breaks a rule or is not performing satisfactory work, "progressive discipline" may be used to correct the problem. This means each time a particular rule is broken by an employee, the penalty may become more severe. Although the progressive discipline process is the most commonly used process at ADVA, it is not the sole process used. Some actions may be so severe that progressive discipline would be inappropriate. Therefore, supervisors must assess the situation and act appropriately given the circumstances of the employee violation(s). Details of the disciplinary policy are located on the ADVA Website.

## Employee Benefits

The State of Arkansas and the Department of Veterans Affairs has assembled some very good benefits for you and your family. If you have questions, please consult your immediate supervisor or HRS.

### Legal Holidays

You are granted time off to observe the following regularly scheduled legal holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's & Robert E. Lee's Birthday	Third Monday in January
Presidents Day & Daisy Gaston Bates Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25
Employee's Birthday	Employee is given one day to celebrate his/her birthday.

If you are required to work on a holiday, you are eligible to earn up to eight hours of Holiday Time.

To be eligible for Holiday time, you must be in "pay status" the last work day before the holiday, and at least one hour on the first work day after the holiday. You are considered to be in "pay status" if you are not on Leave Without Pay.

If a holiday falls while you are on compensatory time, annual or sick leave, that day is charged as a Holiday and is not charged against annual, sick or compensatory leave. If a holiday falls on your regularly scheduled day off, you will be credited Holiday time. If a holiday falls while you are on Worker' Compensation, that day is charged as a holiday and will not be charged against annual or sick leave as long as you are in "pay status."

State offices located in Pulaski County will remain open when a legal holiday occurs during a general or special session of the legislature, with the exception of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. These offices will maintain the minimum number of employees required to conduct State business. However, these offices may be permitted to close by Resolution of the General Assembly. You must work on holidays when the needs of the Department require it. Holidays that are worked must be scheduled off by the supervisor as soon as possible. Should a holiday remain on the books for a year, the holiday will be lost.



## Annual Leave

Full time employees accrue leave at the rates shown in the timetable listed below. Employees who work less than full time but more than 1000 hours per year accrue annual leave in the same proportion as time worked. For example, employees who work half time would receive half of the annual leave accrual shown on the timetable.

Years of Employment	Monthly	Annually	Qualifier
Through 3 years	1 Day	12 Days	At time of hire and for 3 full years
4 through 5 years	1 Day 2 Hours	15 Days	Completed 3 full years and starting in the 4 <sup>th</sup> year
6 through 12 years	1 Day 4 Hours	18 Days	Completed 5 full years and starting in the 6 <sup>th</sup> year
13 through 20 years	1 Day 6 Hours	21 Days	Completed 12 full years and starting in the 13 <sup>th</sup> year
Over 20 years	1 Day 7 Hours	22.5 Days	Completed 20 full years and starting in the 21 <sup>st</sup> year

Accrual rates will change on the first day of the month following eligibility for the next higher accrual rate.

Annual leave is cumulative and the balance must be 240 hours or less on December 31st of each year. Accrued leave may exceed 240 hours during the calendar year, but hours exceeding the 240 will be forfeited if not used by December 31st of each year.

You may not earn annual leave when on leave without pay for 10 or more cumulative days within a calendar month.

You may request to use accrued annual leave at any time. Your supervisor may grant the leave request at such time that least interferes with the efficient operation of the agency.

Annual leave is granted on the basis of work days, not calendar days. Non-work days, such as holidays and weekends, are not charged as annual leave.

Annual leave accrued during a calendar month is not actually earned until the last working day of the month. Leave must be earned before it can be used; therefore, it may not be used from anticipated future accruals and you may not use annual leave accrued by other employees.

You must use all compensatory time and holidays on the books before you may use annual leave, unless you are in use or lose annual leave situation at the end of the calendar year.

## Educational Leave Benefit

All full-time state employees are entitled to eight (8) hours of leave during any one calendar year for the purpose of attending or assisting with the educational activities of a child. "Child" means a person enrolled in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 who is of the following relation to a state employee:

- A. Natural child;
- B. Adopted child;

- C. Stepchild;
- D. Foster child;
- E. Grandchild;
- F. Ward of the state employee by virtue of the state employee having been appointed the person's legal guardian or custodian; or
- G. Any other legal capacity where the employee is acting as a parent for the child.

"Educational activity" means any school-sponsored activity which includes without limitation:

- A. A parent – teacher conference;
- B. Participation in school-sponsored tutoring;
- C. Participation in a school-sponsored volunteer program;
- D. A field trip;
- E. A classroom program;
- F. A school committee meeting;
- G. An academic competition; and
- H. Assisting with athletic, music, or theater programs.

### **Sick Leave**

If you work a minimum of 1,000 hours per year in a regular salary position you will accrue sick leave. If you work less than full time but more than 1,000 hours per year, you will accrue sick leave in the same proportion as time worked.

You accrue sick leave at the rate of 1 day for each completed month of service; however, you may not have over 960s hours of accumulated time on December 31st of each year. Accrued sick leave may exceed 960 hours during the calendar year, but those days in excess of 960 hours will be forfeited if not used by December 31st of each year.

Sick leave accrued during a calendar month is not earned until the last working day of the month. Leave must be earned before it can be used. Sick leave is granted on the basis of work days, not calendar days. Non-work days, such as holidays and weekends, are not charged as sick leave. The use of sick leave is contingent upon the occurrence of one of the events listed below. If the event never occurs, you are not entitled to the sick leave.

### **Sick leave may be used for the following purposes only:**

- You are unable to work because of sickness or injury; or for medical, dental or optical treatment.
- Death or serious illness of a member of your immediate family (father, mother, sister, brother, spouse, child, grandparents, grandchild, in-laws or any individual acting as your parent or guardian.)

The minimum sick leave amount an employee can use is 15 minutes. No smaller amount may be authorized or used.

If you are on sick leave for 5 or more consecutive days, you must furnish a certificate of illness from an attending physician. Your supervisor may require you to furnish a certificate from an attending physician for any use of sick leave. A certificate from a Christian Science practitioner listed in the

Christian Science Journal may be submitted in lieu of a physician's certificate.

Requests to use sick leave for medical, dental or optical examinations, hospital stays, funerals, etc. should be made in advance.

If you fail to make proper notification for use of sick leave as provided herein, such absences will be charged to your annual leave or leave without pay. You must complete a leave form when requesting sick leave in advance or within 2 working days after returning to work after non-scheduled use of sick leave.

### **Military Leave**

If you are regular, full-time ADVA employee and a member of the National Guard or any of the reserve branches of the US Armed Forces, you will be granted military leave of 15 working days per calendar year, plus necessary travel time for annual training purposes. Up to 15 unused military leave days may be carried over to the succeeding year for a maximum of 30 military leave days for military training for that calendar year.

Military leave for annual training or other official training duties will be granted without loss of pay and in addition to annual leave.

Active Duty for Military Service: If you are a regular, full-time employee who is drafted or called to active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States or volunteers for military service, you will be placed on extended military leave without pay; all unused sick leave at the time of military leave will be reinstated at the time you return. At the time your return to ADVA, your annual leave balance will be reinstated, unless you requested and received a lump-sum payment for the annual leave balance when placed on extended military leave.

Active Duty for the Purpose of Specialized Training: In cases where you volunteer or are ordered to active duty for the purpose of special training, you will be placed on leave without pay for the period of training unless you elect to use your accrued annual leave. This leave without pay is given in addition to the paid leave for annual military training. You will retain eligibility rights including accumulated annual leave (unless the above option has been exercised) and any sick leave not used at the time you begin the training. You do not accumulate annual or sick leave during the leave without pay period, and the annual leave accrual rate will be calculated as though there had been no period of absence.

If you perform active military service for fewer than 31 days, you must report for reemployment on the first regularly scheduled workday within 8 hours after discharge from military service. If you serve more than 30 but less than 181 days, you must report within 14 days after discharge. If you serve more than 180 days, you must report for reemployment within 90 days after discharge from military service.

**You must attach a copy of your military orders to each request for military leave.**

### **Maternity Leave**

Maternity leave is to be treated as any other leave for sickness or disability. However, you may elect to take leave of absence without pay without exhausting accumulated annual and sick leave. Before taking maternity leave, you should talk with the physician and submit a doctor's statement to your

supervisor indicating when maternity leave will begin and end. The most common request for time off is 1-2 weeks before childbirth and for six weeks after.

While on maternity leave, you will continue to earn annual and sick leave unless you are on leave without pay. You have the option of choosing to take leave without pay instead of using earned annual or sick leave. Consult the Family Medical Leave Act for requirements which may impact maternity leave.

### **Court and Jury Leave**

If you serve as a juror or you are subpoenaed as a witness to give a deposition in a court or hearing, not involving personal litigation or service as a paid witness outside the scope of state employment, you are entitled to receive normal and full compensation in addition to any fees paid for such services. If you provide reasonable notice to your supervisor of the required proceedings, you will not be subject to discharge from employment, loss of annual or sick leave days or accrual rates, or any other form of penalty. You must submit a copy of the subpoena, summons, or statement from the court with the time sheets when taking Court or Jury Leave. If you are called to Jury Duty, you may keep any fees paid for such services. However, if you are called for service and released, you must notify your supervisor immediately and return to work to complete the rest of the work day.

### **Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

FLMA allows eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks (84 calendar days) of unpaid, job-protected leave per calendar year for any of the following reasons:

1. Birth and care of a newborn child;
2. Adoption or foster care of a child;
3. Care of employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; and
4. Employee's own serious health condition.

To be eligible for FMLA, you must have been employed by the State for at least one year. To apply, submit the normal "Request for Leave" form, check the appropriate block at the bottom of the form, include the "Request for Family and Medical Leave Form" and a completed "Certification of Physician or Practitioner Form."

FMLA leave is leave without pay. However, ADVA requires you to use annual, sick leave, holiday, or compensatory time balances before FMLA.

FMLA may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave (part-time) schedule so long as it does not result in a reduction in the total amount of leave to which the employee is entitled.

- FMLA will be counted against your annual FMLA leave entitlement;
- You are required to furnish medical certification of any serious health condition.  
Failure to do so may result in the FMLA request being denied.
- If you are in a LWOP status, you are required to make premium payments to maintain your health benefits you may contact the insurance specialist in HRS to make arrangements for such payments. Failure to make such payments on a timely basis may result in insurance coverage being canceled.

- You may be required to furnish fitness-for-duty certificate to be restored to employment.
- You are restored to the same or an equivalent position upon return from leave.
- The ADVA may recover its share of health insurance premiums paid during the unpaid FMLA if you fail to return to work after taking FMLA leave.

For FMLA forms, contact your timekeeper or HRS.

### **Leave Without Pay (LWOP)**

LWOP may not be used unless an employee needs emergency time off and has no annual, sick leave, holiday or compensatory leave. LWOP may be imposed as a disciplinary measure. See the ADVA policy manual located on the website for additional information.

You may apply to take LWOP by submitting a request form to your immediate supervisor who will present it to the ADVA Director for approval. Time off on leave without pay is up to six months.

If you use 10 or more days of LWOP in any month, you will not earn annual and sick leave for that month. If you are on LWOP when a legal holiday is observed you will not receive pay for the holiday. LWOP status may interrupt participation in the State's group health insurance. There are a few exceptions to this rule if you are on Military, Worker's Compensation or Family Medical Leave.

This rule does not prevent you from paying the premium cost of your group insurance. During LWOP, you must pay the total cost for ADVA group insurance, which includes your premium and ADVA's cost. You should contact the HRS insurance benefits specialist in advance to continue insurance coverage while in a LWOP status.

### **Catastrophic Leave Bank Program**

You may voluntarily donate earned holiday, annual and sick leave to the Catastrophic Leave Bank for use by eligible employees as long as the donation will not reduce annual and/or sick leave combined to less than 80 hours except in the case of death, retirement or termination. This program provides full time employees with paid leave when they are faced with a catastrophic illness and who otherwise have to be placed on LWOP.

A catastrophic illness is a medical condition of an employee or of the spouse or parent of the employee or of a child of the employee which may be claimed as a dependent under the Arkansas Income Tax Act of 1929, as certified by a physician that requires an employee's absence from duty for a prolonged period of time and which, except for the catastrophic leave program, would result in a substantial loss of income to the employee because of the exhaustion of all earned sick and annual leave.

To request Catastrophic Leave, you must have been employed by the State for at least 2 years, and at the onset of the catastrophic illness or injury, have to their credit at least 80 hours of combined sick and annual leave and have exhausted all leave, holidays and compensatory time. To be considered for catastrophic leave you must complete an application, with attachments and forward it to the HRS Administrator in an envelope marked "Confidential". Forms may be secured from your time keeper.

A committee of OPM employees reviews the applications for catastrophic leave and makes a recommendation to the Director based on the information submitted. HRS will notify the applicant of approval or disapproval of their request.

To donate leave time, the employee must secure the necessary forms from their timekeeper, complete the forms and return it to the timekeeper before the adjustment can be made. ADVA employees fund this entire program. Therefore, the catastrophic leave committee must be good stewards of those donations and make awards of catastrophic leave in a most frugal manner.

### **Workers' Compensation**

The purpose of Worker's Compensation is to provide payment of your medical expenses and partial salary continuation in the event of a work-related accident or illness. The amount and length of these payments depend upon the nature of your injury or illness. In general, however, all medical expenses connected with the injury are paid in full and you receive partial salary payments.

If you are injured on the job, you must immediately report the injury to your supervisor. Failure to make this report may jeopardize your right to Workers' Compensation. Your immediate supervisor will give you the name of the managed care provider in your area. If you select a doctor outside network, Workers' Compensation will not cover the cost of the treatment. You must also give your supervisor a doctor's statement indicating the extent of your injury and any required change in your work status.

If you are going to be absent from work for an extended period, you may use your earned sick or annual leave, compensatory time or holidays to supplement your income so you can receive your usual and customary rate of pay. Under no circumstances will workers compensation and the employee's regular salary exceed the employee's regular salary.

### **Deferred Compensation**

Deferred Compensation is a tax deferred investment program for ADVA employees. You are permitted, on a voluntary basis, to authorize a portion of your salary to be withheld and invested. Deferred Compensation payments are payroll deductible.

Neither the amount withheld nor earnings on the investments are subject to current State and federal income taxes until they are withdrawn, usually at retirement. Benefits can also be withdrawn if you terminate employment or file a "hardship" request. Each year you may defer up to 25% of your state salary with a maximum annual deferral of \$20,000 and a minimum bi-weekly deferral of \$10.00.

### **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

The EAP is a service which provides counseling, management consultation, information and referrals for you and your immediate family members who are enrolled in the Health Plan and are experiencing problems, having concerns or needing information on health related topics. If you are uninsured, the EAP benefits do not cover your spouse and/or dependants.

You are encouraged to use the EAP to resolve personal or family problems. Supervisors may refer you to the EAP for problems, critical incident debriefing and stressful situations that may be adversely affecting your job performance.

You may participate in the EAP by calling 1-866-378-1645 or by contacting the ADVA HRS. EAP staff is available for emergencies 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Appointments for non-emergency situations are made during regular business hours which include some evening hours.

The EAP provides clinical assessment and short term problem resolution for up to eight sessions at no cost to the member participating in the state of Arkansas Health Plan. Treatment by psychiatrists and facility-based care are specifically not included in the EAP, and EAP counselors do not provide ongoing therapy for patients needing longer term care. Serious and/or chronic mental illness or substance abuse problems will require immediate referral to a mental health provider under terms of the behavioral health benefit and involve co-payment and coinsurance.

### **Savings Bonds**

Savings Bonds are available to you by payroll deduction. The purchase price is one-half the face value. For example, \$25 will buy a \$50 bond. Denominations are \$50, \$75, \$100, \$200, \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000. The minimum deduction per pay period for the purchase of a bond is \$10. Contact the benefit specialist in HRS for additional information.

### **Retirement**

The Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System (APERS) is a non-contributory plan and contributory. If you were hired before July 1, 2005, you are under the non-contributory plan there is no contribution made by the employee and ADVA pays the entire amount. If you were hired after July 1, 2005, you are under the contributory plan where you contribute 5% of your annual salary and ADVA contributes the rest of the premium.

Under the state retirement plan, you can voluntarily retire with full benefits, at either age 65 with 5 years service or at any age after 28 years of credited service. The minimum pension, by State law, is \$150 per month. To find out what your pension would be upon retirement, contact the APERS.

### **Credit Union**

The Credit Union is a non-profit corporation that serves only its members and is owned and operated by them. Members who save at the credit union provide the money for those who need to borrow. The interest paid on loans is used to pay dividends on the savings. The members elect a board of directors to manage the organization and a credit committee to approve loans. Participation is optional and contributions, as well as loan payments, are payroll deductible. You (even if retired from the state) and your family members are eligible to become members.

### **Arkansas State Employee's Association (ASEA)**

The ASEA, an independent, non-profit organization, focuses on improving working conditions for State employees.

ASEA lobbies the General Assembly on behalf of State employees, publishes and distributes "ALERT" a weekly memorandum of what is happening on employee-related matters. They also publish other

informational newsletters.

ASEA offers its members a benefit package called SEBCO (State Employee's Benefit Corporation) which includes a vanpool program, credit union, and various insurance coverage, such as dental, home, automobile, life, burial, vision, cancer, and accidental death. These program costs are optional and payroll deductible.

Participation is optional and dues are payroll deductible.

### **State Employee Suggestion System**

The purpose of the Employee Suggestion System is to reward employees who find faster and less expensive ways to do the State's business without a loss in quality. This program opens a channel of communication between the employee and management that allows these suggestions to be heard. To submit a suggestion or acquire more information contact either the ADVA HRS or

Office of Personnel Management  
DFA Building, Room 201, 7th & Martin Luther King Jr.  
PO Box 3278  
Little Rock, AR 72203

Suggestions must be on the official suggestion form and should be very detailed and specific. Attach any number of graphs, charts, diagrams, worksheets or supportive papers as needed. Eligible suggestions will be forwarded to a subject matter expert for evaluation.

The evaluation period is 30 calendar days. Payment of award, if any is due, will be at the end of the test period or after the suggestion has been in effect for one year, whichever is less. If an award is given, it will be \$100 or 10% of the amount of the savings, up to a maximum of \$5,000.

### **Chemical Right-to-Know**

You have a right to training and information concerning hazardous chemicals, if any, they are expected to use on the job, if any. This enables you to minimize your exposure to such chemicals and protect your health, safety and welfare. Contact your supervisor or the ADVA Purchasing Department for information regarding chemicals used.

### **Health Insurance**

There are various types of health insurance options. Due to the vast range of coverage by each plan, your questions should be directed to the benefit/insurance specialist in the HRS.



# **ADVA Policy**

## **General Guidance on ADVA Policies and Procedures**

The ADVA Policy and Procedure Manual establish policy and procedure for agency operations. Procedural guidance is also published in division manuals and standard operating procedures. These documents are located on the ADVA Website at <http://www.veterans.arkansas.gov/>. Contact your immediate supervisor for any questions regarding accessing the website or questions regarding the content of any specific policy or operating standard. You are required to read applicable policies that pertain to general agency operations and any job specific operations. You are required to follow policy which applies to you.

The ADVA Policy and Procedure Manual include Administrative Regulations issued from the Board, Administrative Directives published by the ADVA Director, and Administrative Memoranda issued by Deputy Directors. Deputy Directors may also publish Administrative Manuals.

You are responsible for understanding and following applicable policy and procedure. Policy and procedure documents do not reflect or represent every conceived situation, but rather address areas where common understanding is important. If you have questions about policy issues, consult your immediate supervisor.

## **Required Policies and Acknowledgements**

The following pages are specific departmental policies you are required to know and follow. These policies will be covered in detail during orientation and you will be required to sign an acknowledgement that you have reviewed and understand the policies.

All agency policies undergo routine review and updating. You are required to keep up-to-date with all agency policies and procedures. These documents can be located on the agency website at <http://www.veterans.arkansas.gov> under the policies section.